RTRS

Round Table on Responsible Soy Association

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Contents

Preamble i

Principle 1: Legal Compliance and Good Business Practice 1
Principle 2: Responsible Labor Conditions 1
Principle 3: Responsible Community Relations 4
Principle 4: Environmental Responsibility 5
Principle 5: Good Agricultural Practice 6

Annex 1: Guidance 10
Annex 2: List of Acronyms 16
Annex 3: Glossary of Terms 17
Annex 4: RTRS Approach to Responsible Conversion 20
Annex 5: Integrated Crop Management (ICM) Measures and Practices in Soy Production 22
Annex 6: Guidance for National Interpretations 24

Preamble

Development of this Document: The Roundtable on Responsible Soy Standard for Responsible Soy Production, version 1.0 (RTRS Standard) is the result of a multi-stakeholder development process, which involved representatives from the three RTRS membership constituencies, and included several public consultation periods.

A two year multi-stakeholder process lead to the publication of the RTRS Principles and Criteria for Responsible Soy Production: Field Testing Version, in May 2009. This version was used by National Technical Groups (NTGs) in five countries to initiate national interpretation processes, and by producers and auditors for field trials carried out in a variety of soy producing countries.

In March 2010 the RTRS convened an International Technical Group (ITG) to review the Field Trial principles and criteria and produce a set of auditable Principles and Criteria for use with a certification scheme. As a part of their work the multi-stakeholder group reviewed and took into account changes proposed by NTGs, public consultation comments on draft National Interpretations, guidance from the RTRS Executive Board on the issue of land clearance and feedback from field trials and diagnosis audits. This group, made up of representatives from the three RTRS member constituencies, concluded their work at a meeting in São Paulo, Brazil, 24-27 March, 2010

Review: The standard will be reviewed not less than once every five years and not more than once every three years unless exceptions are identified or unless the RTRS Executive Board or General Assembly determines otherwise. In Version 1.0 of this standard, one criterion (criterion 4.4) needs to be reviewed within 2 years.

National Interpretation: Each soy-producing country is encouraged to make a national interpretation of the standard which, once endorsed by the RTRS, will become the basis for certification in that country. National interpretation processes are required to meet the RTRS requirements for national interpretation related to process and content. When considering how to interpret this standard for national use, the Guidance for National Interpretation (Annex 6) must be followed. Groups carrying out national interpretation may not create requirements which are less stringent than the International RTRS Standard.

Scope of application: This standard applies to all kinds of soybeans, including conventionally grown, organic, and genetically modified (GM). It has been designed to be used for all scales of soy production and all the countries where soy is produced.

Transparency: This standard has been designed to be used within a voluntary certification system. All those seeking certification should do so with a commitment to transparency with respect to the requirements of this standard, including a spirit of constructive engagement with stakeholders and sharing of non-commercially sensitive information. A publicly-available summary of information about the performance of each certified organization with respect to each criterion will be produced. This will not contain commercially-sensitive information.

Monitoring: Where indicators require monitoring to be undertaken, a baseline should be established at the time of certification with monitoring and review of trends over time. Producers are expected to commit to a process of continual improvement. For group certification, monitoring at the group level should be used where appropriate.

Principle 1: Legal Compliance and Good Business Practice

1.1 There is awareness of, and compliance with, all applicable local and national legislation.

Note: For group certification of small farms - group managers should provide training for group members on applicable laws and legal compliance.

1.1.1 Awareness of responsibilities, according to applicable laws can be demonstrated.

1.1.2 Applicable laws are being complied with.

1.2 Legal use rights to the land are clearly defined and demonstrable.

Note: Land use rights of traditional land users are considered in Criterion 3.2 which should be cross-referenced with this criterion.

1.2.1 There is documented evidence of rights to use the land (e.g. ownership document, rental agreement, court order etc.).

1.3 There is continual improvement with respect to the requirements of this standard.

Note: For group certification - continual improvement should be recorded and monitored at the group level.

1.3.1 A review process is carried out which identifies those social, environmental and agricultural aspects of the operation (on and off farm) where improvement is desirable.

Note: The producer is expected to be aware of the social and environmental context in which he/she is operating and the existing and possible future impacts of the operation.

1.3.2 A number of indicators are selected and a baseline is established to be able to monitor continual improvement on those aspects where desired improvements have been identified.

Note: Producers are free to choose the continual improvement indicators that are relevant to them to demonstrate continual improvement with respect to the requirements of this standard; e.g. Soil carbon content, use of agrochemicals, state of riparian vegetation etc. The baseline year is the year of first certification assessment.

1.3.3 The results of monitoring are reviewed and appropriate action is planned and taken when necessary to ensure continual improvement.

Principle 2: Responsible Labor Conditions

Note 1: The requirements of Principle 2 apply to both direct employees and to workers supplied by third parties.

Note 2: The principle applies also to migrant, seasonal and other contract labor.

2.1 Child labor, forced labor, discrimination and harassment are not engaged in or supported.

2.1 1 No forced, compulsory, bonded, trafficked or otherwise involuntary labor is used at any stage of production.

2.1.2 No workers of any type are required to lodge their identity papers with anyone and no part of their salary, benefits or property is retained, by the owner or any 3rd party, unless permitted by law.

2.1.3 Spouses and children of contracted workers are not obliged to work on the farm.

2.1.4 Children and minors (below 18) do not conduct hazardous work or any work that jeopardizes their physical, mental or moral well being.

2.1.5 Children under 15 (or higher age as established in national law) do not carry out productive work. They may accompany their family to the field as long as they are not exposed to hazardous, unsafe or unhealthy situations and it does not interfere with their schooling

2.1.6 There is no engagement in, support for, or tolerance of any form of discrimination.

2.1.7 All workers receive equal remuneration for work of equal value, equal access to training and benefits and equal opportunities for promotion and for filling all available positions.

2.1.8 Workers are not subject to corporal punishment, mental or physical oppression or coercion, verbal or physical abuse, sexual harassment or any other kind of intimidation.

2.2 Workers, directly and indirectly employed on the farm, and sharecroppers, are adequately informed and trained for their tasks and are aware of their rights and duties.

2.2.1 Workers (including temporary workers), sharecroppers, contractors and subcontractors have a written contract, in a language that they can understand.

Note: The requirements of indicator 2.2.1 are recommended in all cases. However, for small farms where there are high illiteracy rates group managers may implement alternative mechanisms to make collectively known and verify valid working relationships.

2.2.2 Labor laws, union agreements or direct contracts of employment detailing payments and conditions of employment (e.g. working hours, deductions, overtime, sickness, holiday entitlement, maternity leave, reasons for dismissal, period of notice, etc.) are available in the languages understood by the workers or explained carefully to them by a manager or supervisor.

2.2.3 Adequate and appropriate training and comprehensible instructions on fundamental rights at work, health and safety and any necessary guidance or supervision are provided to all workers.

2.3 A safe and healthy workplace is provided for all workers.

2.3.1 Producers and their employees demonstrate an awareness and understanding of health and safety matters.

2.3.2 Relevant health and safety risks are identified, procedures are developed to address these risks by employers, and these are monitored.

2.3.3 Potentially hazardous tasks are only carried out by capable and competent people who do not face specific health risks.

2.3.4 Adequate and appropriate protective equipment and clothing is provided and used in all potentially hazardous operations such as pesticide handling and application and mechanized or manual operations.

2.3.5 There is a system of warnings followed by legally-permitted sanctions for workers that do not apply safety requirements.

2.3 6 Accident and emergency procedures exist and instructions are clearly understood by all workers.

2.3.7 In case of accidents or illness, access to first aid and medical assistance is provided without delay.

2.4 There is freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining for all workers.

2.4.1 There is the right for all workers and sharecroppers to establish and/or join an organization of their choice.

2.4.2 The effective functioning of such organizations is not impeded. Representatives are not subject to discrimination and have access to their members in the workplace on request.

2.4.3 All workers have the right to perform collective bargaining.

2.4.4 Workers are not hindered from interacting with external parties outside working hours (e.g. NGOs, trade unions, labor inspectors, agricultural extension workers, certification bodies).

2.5 Remuneration at least equal to national legislation and sector agreements is received by all workers directly or indirectly employed on the farm.

2.5.1 Gross wages that comply with national legislation and sector agreements are paid at least monthly to workers.

2.5.2 Deductions from wages for disciplinary purposes are not made, unless legally permitted. Wages and benefits are detailed and clear to workers, and workers are paid in a manner convenient to them. Wages paid are recorded by the employer.

2.5.3 Normal weekly working hours do not exceed 48 hours. Weekly overtime hours do not exceed 12 hours.

2.5.4 If additional overtime hours are necessary the following conditions are met:

a) It only occurs for limited periods of time (eg. peak harvest, planting).

b) Where there is a trade union or representative organization the overtime conditions are negotiated and agreed with that organization.

c) Where there is no trade union or representative organization agreement the average working hours in the two-month period after the start of the exceptional period still do not exceed 60 hours per week.

2.5.5 Working hours per worker are recorded by the employer.

2.5.6 Overtime work at all times is voluntary and paid according to legal or sector standards. In case overtime work is needed, workers receive timely notification. Workers are entitled to at least one day off following every six consecutive days of work.

2.5.7 Salaried workers have all entitlements and protection in national law and practice with respect to maternity. Workers taking maternity leave are entitled to return to their employment on the same terms and conditions that applied to them prior to taking leave and they are not subject to any discrimination, loss of seniority or deductions of wages.

2.5.8 If workers are paid per result, a normal 8 hour working day allows workers, (men and women), to earn at least the national or sector established minimum wage.

2.5.9 If employees live on the farm, they have access to affordable and adequate housing, food and potable water. If charges are made for these, such charges are in accordance with market conditions. The living quarters are safe and have at least basic sanitation.

Principle 3: Responsible Community Relations

3.1 Channels are available for communication and dialogue with the local community on topics related to the activities of the soy farming operation and its impacts.

3.1.1 Documented evidence of communication channels and dialogue is available.

3.1.2 The channels adequately enable communication between the producer and the community.

3.1.3 The communication channels have been made known to the local communities.

3.2 In areas with traditional land users, conflicting land uses are avoided or resolved.

3.2.1 In the case of disputed use rights, a comprehensive, participatory and documented community rights assessment is carried out.

3.2.2 Where rights have been relinquished by traditional land users there is documented evidence that the affected communities are compensated subject to their free, prior, informed and documented consent.

3.3 A mechanism for resolving complaints and grievances is implemented and available to local communities and traditional land users.

Note: For group certification - the complaints and grievances mechanism can be managed by the group manager and records of complaints and grievances can be maintained at the group level.

3.3.1 The complaints and grievances mechanism has been made known and is accessible to the communities.

3.3.2 Documented evidence of complaints and grievances received is maintained.

3.3.3 Any complaints and grievances received are dealt with in a timely manner.

3.4 Fair opportunities for employment and provision of goods and services are given to the local population.

3.4.1 Employment opportunities are made known locally.

Note: Not applicable for small farms.

3.4.2 There is collaboration with training programs for the local population.

Note: Small farms may participate in training programs where they exist. For groups the collaboration with training programs may occur at the group level.

3.4.3 Opportunities for supply of goods and services are offered to the local population.

Note: Not applicable for small farms.

Principle 4: Environmental Responsibility

4.1 On and off site social and environmental impacts of large or high risk new infrastructure have been assessed and appropriate measures taken to minimize and mitigate any negative impacts.

Note: For group certification – this also applies to large new infrastructure projects developed by the entity holding the group certificate, where the infrastructure is used by certified group members or the certified soy they produce.

4.1.1 A social and environmental assessment is carried out prior to the establishment of large or high risk new infrastructure.

4.1.2 The assessment is carried out by someone who is adequately trained and experienced for this task.

4.1.3 The assessment is carried out in a comprehensive and transparent manner.

4.1.4 Measures to minimize or mitigate the impacts identified by the assessment are documented and are being implemented.

4.2 Pollution is minimized and production waste is managed responsibly.

Note: Chemical use and disposal is dealt with under Principle 5.

4.2.1 There is no burning on any part of the property of crop residues, waste, or as part of vegetation clearance, except under one of the following conditions:

a) Where there is a legal obligation to burn as a sanitary measure;

b) Where it is used for generation of energy including charcoal production and for drying crops;

c) Where only small-caliber residual vegetation from land clearing remains after all useable material has been removed for other uses.

4.2.2 There is adequate storage and disposal of fuel, batteries, tires, lubricants, sewage and other waste.

4.2.3 There are facilities to prevent spills of oil[1] and other pollutants.

4.2.4 Re-use and recycling are utilized wherever possible.

4.2.5 There is a residue management plan including all areas of the property.

4.3 Efforts are made to reduce emissions and increase sequestration of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) on the farm.

Note: Other issues which are relevant to GHG emissions are covered in other principles including: Use of fertilizers (Criterion 5.5), Land-use change (Criterion 4.4).

4.3.1 Total direct fossil fuel use over time is recorded, and its volume per hectare and per unit of product for all activities related to soy production is monitored.

4.3.2 If there is an increase in the intensity of fossil fuel used, there is a justification for this. If no justification is available there is an action plan to reduce use.

4.3.3 Soil organic matter is monitored to quantify change in soil carbon and steps are taken to mitigate negative trends.

Note: For group certification of small farms - the monitoring of soil carbon can be done using samples.

[1] Oil refers to motor oil

4.3.4 Opportunities for increasing carbon sequestration through restoration of native vegetation, forest plantations and other means are identified.

4.4 Expansion of soy cultivation is responsible.

Note: This criterion will be revised after June 2012 if RTRS-approved maps and system are not available.

4.4.1 After May 2009 expansion for soy cultivation has not taken place on land cleared of native habitat except under the following conditions:

4.4.1.1 It is in line with an RTRS-approved map and system (see Annex 4.)

or

4.4.1.2 Where no RTRS-approved map and system is available:

a) Any area already cleared for agriculture or pasture before May 2009 and used for agriculture or pasture within the past 12 years can be used for soy expansion, unless regenerated vegetation has reached the definition of native forest (see glossary).

b) There is no expansion in native forests (see glossary)

c) In areas that are not native forest (see glossary), expansion into native habitat only occurs according to one of the following two options:

Option 1. Official land-use maps such as ecological-economic zoning are used and expansion only occurs in areas designated for expansion by the zoning. If there are no official land use maps then maps produced by the government under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are used, and expansion only occurs outside priority areas for conservation shown on these maps.

Option 2. An High Conservation Value Area (HCVA) assessment is undertaken prior to clearing and there is no conversion of High Conservation Value Areas.

Note: Where neither official land use maps nor CBD maps exist, Option 2 must be followed.

4.4.2 There is no conversion of land where there is an unresolved land use claim by traditional land users under litigation, without the agreement of both parties.

4.5 On-farm biodiversity is maintained and safeguarded through the preservation of native vegetation.

4.5.1 There is a map of the farm which shows the native vegetation.

4.5.2 There is a plan, which is being implemented, to ensure that the native vegetation is being maintained (except areas covered under Criterion 4.4)

4.5.3 No hunting of rare, threatened or endangered species takes place on the property.

Principle 5: Good Agricultural Practice

5.1 The quality and supply of surface and ground water is maintained or improved.

5.1.1 Good agricultural practices are implemented to minimize diffuse and localized impacts on surface and ground water quality from chemical residues, fertilizers, erosion or other sources and to promote aquifer recharge.

5.1.2 There is monitoring, appropriate to scale, to demonstrate that the practices are effective.

5.1.3 Any direct evidence of localized contamination of ground or surface water is reported to, and monitored in collaboration with local authorities.

5.1.4 Where irrigation is used, there is a documented procedure in place for applying best practices and acting according to legislation and best practice guidance (where this exists), and for measurement of water utilization.

Note: For group certification of small farms - Where irrigation is used for crops other than soy but is not done according to best practice, a plan is in place and is being implemented to improve practices. The group manager is responsible for documentation.

5.2 Natural vegetation areas around springs and along natural watercourses are maintained or re-established.

5.2.1 The location of all watercourses has been identified and mapped, including the status of the riparian vegetation.

5.2.2 Where natural vegetation in riparian areas has been removed there is a plan with a timetable for restoration which is being implemented.

5.2.3 Natural wetlands are not drained and native vegetation is maintained.

5.3 Soil quality is maintained or improved and erosion is avoided by good management practices.

5.3.1 Knowledge of techniques to maintain soil quality (physical, chemical and biological) is demonstrated and these techniques are implemented.

5.3.2 Knowledge of techniques to control soil erosion is demonstrated and these techniques are implemented.

5.3.3 Appropriate monitoring, including soil organic matter content, is in place.

Note: For group certification - Monitoring of soil fertility and soil quality should be part of the internal control system and can be carried out on a sampling basis within the group.

5.4 Negative environmental and health impacts of phytosanitary products are reduced by implementation of systematic, recognized Integrated Crop Management (ICM) techniques.

Note: See Annex 5 for further information on ICM.

5.4.1 A plan for ICM is documented and implemented which addresses the use of prevention, and biological and other non-chemical or selective chemical controls.

Note: For group certification of small farms - (particularly those who are not literate) the development and documentation of the ICM plan should be undertaken by the group manager, together with support for implementation.

5.4.2 There is an implemented plan that contains targets for reduction of potentially harmful phytosanitary products over time.

5.4.3 Use of phytosanitary products follows legal requirements and professional recommendations (or, if professional recommendations are not available, manufacturer's recommendations) and includes rotation of active ingredients to prevent resistance.

5.4.4 Records of monitoring of pests, diseases, weeds and natural predators are maintained.

5.5 All application of agrochemicals[2] is documented and all handling, storage, collection and disposal of chemical waste and empty containers, is monitored to ensure compliance with good practice.

5.5.1 There are records of the use of agrochemicals, including:

a) products purchased and applied, quantity and dates;

b) identification of the area where the application was made;

c) names of the persons that carried out the preparation of the products and field application;

d) identification of the application equipment used;

e) weather conditions during application.

5.5.2 Containers are properly stored, washed and disposed of; waste and residual agrochemicals are disposed in an environmentally appropriate way.

5.5.3 Transportation and storage of agrochemicals is safe and all applicable health, environmental and safety precautions are implemented.

5.5.4 The necessary precautions are taken to avoid people entering into recently sprayed areas.

5.5.5 Fertilizers are used in accordance with professional recommendations (provided by manufacturers where other professional recommendations are not available).

5.6 Agrochemicals listed in the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions are not used.

Note: During the next 3 years, the RTRS will review the use of other chemicals, particularly the following 3 chemicals: Endosulfan (WHO Class II), Paraquat (Class II), Carbofuran (Class Ib)

5.6 1 There is no use of agrochemicals listed in the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions.

5.7 The use of biological control agents is documented, monitored and controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols.

5.7.1 There is information about requirements for use of biological control agents.

5.7.2 Records are kept of all use of biological control agents that demonstrate compliance with national laws.

5.8 Systematic measures are planned and implemented to monitor, control and minimize the spread of invasive introduced species and new pests.

5.8.1 Where there are institutional systems in place to identify and monitor invasive introduced species and new pests, or major outbreaks of existing pests, producers follow the requirements of these systems, to minimize their spread.

5.8.2 Where such systems do not exist, incidences of new pests or invasive species and major outbreaks of existing pests are communicated to the proper authorities and relevant producer organizations or research organizations.

Note: For group certification - the group manager is responsible for communicating to the authorities and relevant organizations.

[2] Note: Agrochemicals refers to all chemicals used including fertilizers and pesticides

5.9 Appropriate measures are implemented to prevent the drift of agrochemicals to neighboring areas.

5.9.1 There are documented procedures in place that specify good agricultural practices, including minimization of drift, in applying agrochemicals and these procedures are being implemented.

5.9.2 Records of weather conditions (wind speed and direction, temperature and relative humidity) during spraying operations are maintained.

5.9.3 Aerial application of pesticides is carried out in such a way that it does not have an impact on populated areas. All aerial application is preceded by advance notification to residents within 500m of the planned application.

Note: 'Populated areas' means any occupied house, office or other building.

5.9.4 There is no aerial application of pesticides in WHO Class Ia, Ib and II within 500m of populated areas or water bodies.

5.9.5 There is no application of pesticides within 30m of any populated areas or water bodies.

Note: 'Water bodies' includes, but is not limited to, water courses, rivers, streams, lagoons, springs, lakes, reservoirs and ditches.

5.10 Appropriate measures are implemented to allow for coexistence of different production systems.

5.10.1 Measures are taken to prevent interference in production systems of neighboring areas.

5.11 Origin of seeds is controlled to improve production and prevent introduction of new diseases.

5.11.1 All purchased seed must come from known legal quality sources.

5.11.2 Self-propagated seeds may be used, provided appropriate seed production norms are followed and legal requirements regarding intellectual property rights are met.

Annex 1: Guidance

The guidance contained in this annex must be followed by all users of the standard, including:

i) auditors, evaluating compliance against the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production Version 1.0

ii) soy growers using the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production Version 1.0 to implement good practice, and achieve certification.

iii) Group managers using the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production Version 1.0 to achieve certification of a group of soy growers.

Criterion	Guidance
1.1	Producers need to have access to information which enables them to know what the law requires them to do. Examples include having a register of laws, or access to relevant advice on legislation. Legal compliance should be verified through: • checking publicly available data on compliance where available; • interviews with staff and stakeholders; and • field observations
1.3	It is recognized that sometimes there may not be improvement for specific continual improvement indicators due to circumstances beyond the control of the certificate holder.
2	In relation to compliance of these requirements by third parties (Note 1): Operations are expected to have a mechanism in place which enables them to adequately verify the compliance of their service providers. Auditors should evaluate the verification mechanism of the operations, to determine whether a sample of service providers should also be assessed by the auditors.
2.1	Documented evidence of relevant personal data of workers should be verified (e.g. sex and date of birth). The data collected should be locally appropriate and legal (eg. it may not be appropriate or legal to ask for the religion of employees in some countries). 2.1.1-2.1.3 Personnel should be free to leave their work place after their hours of work have been completed, and be free to terminate their employment provided that they give reasonable notice. 2.1.1-2.1.3 Reference: ILO Convention 29 on Forced Labor and 105 on Abolition of Forced Labor. 2.1.4-2.1.5 Children and minors (below 18) do not work in dangerous locations, in unhealthy situations, at night, or with dangerous substances or equipment, nor do they carry heavy loads. They are not exposed to any form of abuse and there is no evidence of trafficked, bonded or forced labor. 2.1.4-2.1.5 Reference: ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age and 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor.

Criterion	Guidance
	2.1.6-2.1.7 Discrimination includes, but is not limited to: any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, color, social class, nationality, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, HIV status, union membership or political association, with the purpose or effect of annulling, affecting or prejudicing the recognition, fruition or equal exercise of rights or liberties at work, be it in the process of contracting, remuneration, access to training, promotion, lay-offs or retirement. Divergence in salary is not considered discriminatory when the company has a policy, which is fully known to the employees, which specifies different pay scales for different levels of qualifications, length of experience etc. 2.1.6-2.1.7 Reference: ILO convention 100 on Equal Remuneration, and ILO Convention 111 on Discrimination.
2.2	'*Workers indirectly employed on the farm*' refers here to employees of service providers who carry out services directly related to the production process. The scope of 'services directly related to the production process' will be defined by national interpretations. In those countries where there are no requirements for formal labor agreements between worker and employer, alternative documented evidence of a labor relationship must be provided (eg. Registration of employees with social security / employment agency)
2.3	References: ILO convention 155 on Occupational Safety and Health; ILO Convention 184 on Safety and Health in Agriculture; ILO Recommendation 192 on Safety and Health in Agriculture. The means of verification used should be appropriate to the size and scale of the operation. E.g. (2.3.1) For operations with permanent employees there should be a documented health and safety policy. For small farms this can be demonstrated through verbal explanations. 2.3.6 Accident and emergency procedures should include taking immediate steps to stop any operation where there is an imminent and serious danger to safety and health, and to evacuate as appropriate.
2.4	2.4.1 Reference: ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize. 2.4.3 Reference: ILO Convention 98 on Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining.
2.5	'*Workers indirectly employed on the farm'* refers here to employees of service providers who carry out services directly related to the production process. The scope of '*services directly related to the production process*' will be defined by national interpretations. 2.5.5 and 2.5.6 Reference: ILO Convention 1 on Hours of Work.
3.1	Communication channels need to use local languages and appropriate mediums (eg. the internet is not an appropriate mechanism for communication with communities that have no access to the internet). The communication requirements must be adequate to identify any disputes with traditional land users as referred to in Criterion 3.2 Where people on or adjacent to the property are demonstrated to be illegal (for example illegal squatters), producers should try to engage in communication, but they are not obliged to maintain a dialogue.

Criterion	Guidance
	Local communities may be represented by legitimate representatives in communication or negotiation or in audit situations. Where this is the case, this does not exempt the producer or the auditor from the responsibility of communicating with other members of the community, especially groups such as the poor, illiterate, youth, women or indigenous groups. In the case of small farms documented evidence is not required and is substituted by verbal evidence. It is important to include interviews with members of the community to evaluate the existence of the communication channels and their appropriateness.
3.2	When applying for certification the producer will identify traditional land users. Traditional land users will provide reasonable proof that they have been exercising use or access rights on the area of the property over the 10 years prior to May 2009 (the 'cut-off date') . In the case of traditional indigenous communities, articles 14-18 of ILO convention 169 also apply. Traditional land users may be represented by legitimate representatives in communication, negotiation or audit situations. Where this is the case, this does not exempt the producer or the auditor from the responsibility of communicating with other members of the community. 3.2.1 The community rights assessment should aim to: a) identify the individual and collective uses and rights of traditional land users; and b) identify the places and landscape conditions needed to satisfy these rights. c) identify the places/issues where there is conflict between the property rights and the traditional land use rights d) reach a solution to resolve possible conflicting land uses and/or agree proposals for compensation. Where a legal judgment has been reached the terms of this judgment will be respected. If there is litigation in process, while this is *sub judice* (under litigation; decision pending) this will not prejudice access to certification provided that guidance provided by the judge is followed. In the absence of such guidance, the traditional land user can continue to exercise the claimed rights until the case is resolved.
3.3	Interviews with members of local communities and their representatives are important in verifying compliance with this criterion.
3.4	3.4.1 Evidence may include records kept of the proportion of local employees 3.4.3 This refers to goods and services which are central to the production activities. 3.4.3 Evidence includes quotations for services from local suppliers.
4.1	The assessment should be appropriate to the scale of the operation and the new infrastructure. Where there are existing national requirements for impact assessments which are adequate to meet this criterion (identified by the NTG) these are followed. Where not, the auditors must verify that an adequate process has been followed.

Criterion	Guidance
	Where no adequate legislation exists and national interpretation is not available, the Equator Principles' Social and Environmental assessment procedure should be followed.
4.2	4.2.5 For large and medium producers this should be documented. For small farms it is sufficient that the producer knows what residues are produced and what will be done with each one.
4.3	On farms which produce multiple crops an estimate of the use of fossil fuel for soy production should be calculated. 'Activities related to soy production' include: field operations and on-farm transport, whether this is done by the producer or by third parties. An example of a justification for an increase in the intensity of fossil fuel use may be if a planting was lost due to drought and had to be replanted. The use of renewable energy (biofuels, biogas, solar and wind energy etc) on the farm is encouraged. In the case of renewable energy replacing electricity, quantify the equivalent fossil fuel saving. 4.3.2 There may be annual fluctuations in the intensity of fossil fuel use, due to natural yield variations. The trend should be monitored over a period of several years.
4.4	4.4.1.2 c) Options 1 and 2 only apply for areas which are not native forest (as stated in 4.4.1.2 b and c). Therefore native forest cannot be deforested even if an official land use map (Option 1) permits this. 4.4.1.2 c) Option 1: Maps used for this purpose have been subject to adequate and effective public consultation. 4.4.1.2 c) Option 2: HCVA assessment should be undertaken using the existing guidance e.g. HCV Toolkit. The assessors should be recognized by RTRS or the HCV network. 4.4.2 Traditional land users will provide reasonable proof that they have been exercising use or access rights on the area of the property over the 10 years prior to May 2009. Definition of native forest: areas of native vegetation of 1ha or more with canopy cover of more than 35 % and where some trees (at least 10 trees per hectare) reach 10m in height (or are able to reach these thresholds *in situ* (ie. in that soil/climate combination)) Examples of native forests include Amazon, Mata Atlantica, Yungas, Chiquitano, forest areas of NE China Data capture requirements for future Payment for Environmental Services (PES) schemes: The date of registration of the producer for certification is recorded by the certification body. During the certification audit, the area and type of vegetation of all voluntary reserves of native vegetation (above the legal requirement) are recorded. Following certification, details of the date of registration for certification and the area and type of vegetation of voluntary reserves are added to an RTRS register. When an RTRS PES scheme is developed, payments are available retroactively to the date of registration for certification to all producers on the register.
4.5	The map and plan should be appropriate to the size of the operation. In group certification the group manager can maintain the map centrally and

Criterion	Guidance
	can be responsible for maintaining and developing a plan for conservation.
5.1	5.1.2 Where appropriate there should be monitoring of parameters such as pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and electrical conductivity. Monitoring should be considered at watershed level. 5.1.2 Where there are wells these should be used to monitor ground water. 5.1.4 When using irrigation, attention should be paid to other potential uses such as household use or use by other food crops and if there is a lack of water priority should be given to human consumption.
5.4	Surface and ground water includes lakes, rivers, lagoons, marshes, swamps, ground water sources, aquifers/water tables. Take into account scale and context especially for small farms – this relates to both the level of ICM expected and the records maintained. 5.4.2 The parameters that are monitored include the number of applications of phytosanitary products per crop cycle, volume of phytosanitary product used per hectare and toxicological class of product. 5.4.2 The level of potential harmfulness of a phytosanitary product can be determined from its WHO class for the purposes of this criterion. 5.4.2 Where targets are not met, documented evidence is presented to justify this. 5.4.4 Both local and national legislation should be taken into account.
5.5	5.5.1 Records are maintained for at least 5 years. This does not apply to records from years prior to certification. 5.5.1 Scale and context, especially for small farms, should be taken into account. Exceptions (e.g. for maintaining invoices) may be allowed for small farms in a group, provided that the group has a mechanism for assuring compliance with the criterion. 5.5.2 Washing of containers should be carried out using triple rinsing principles (including re-use of the rinse water in the tank mix) or using high-pressure techniques associated with mechanical application. 5.5.3 Areas used for the storage and distribution of agrochemicals, flammable and toxic substances are designed, constructed and equipped to reduce the risks of accidents and negative impacts on human health and the environment
5.7	Records of use of biological control agents should be used as evidence of compliance with this criterion 5.7.2 Scale and context, especially for small farms, should be taken into account.
5.9	5.9.1 Factors that influence drift include among others wind speed and direction, temperature, equipment utilized and topography, 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 Requirements for small farms should be appropriate to scale and context. 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 For group certification of small farms - group managers may provide documented procedures and maintain records of weather conditions. 5.9.5: There may be an exception for manual application of chemicals not classified as WHO Ia, Ib, or II, if adequate measures are taken to prevent drift

Criterion	Guidance
	(e.g. use of backpack applicators with shields) and it is permitted by the law and manufacturer's recommendations.
5.10	When a change in soybean production practices is introduced which could impact on neighboring production systems, it is the responsibility of the producer making the change to implement a buffer strip of 30 m (e.g. in areas where production is generally GM, it is the responsibility of an organic or non-GM farmer to maintain the buffer around his own production. In areas where production is mainly non-GM or organic, a farmer planting GM or using chemicals should maintain a buffer).

Annex 2: List of Acronyms

GM	Genetically Modified
HCV	High Conservation Value
HCVA	High Conservation Value Area
ICM	Integrated Crop Management
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITG	International Technical Group
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NTG	National Technical Group
P&C	Principles and Criteria
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
RTRS	Round Table on Responsible Soy
SA8000	Social Accountability International (SAI) international standard on workers' rights, working conditions and management systems.
WHO	World Health Organization

Annex 3: Glossary of Terms

Biological Control	A method of controlling pests that relies on predation, parasitism, herbivory, or other natural mechanisms, rather than agrochemicals.
Criteria	The 'content' level of a standard. Conditions that need to be met in order to achieve a Principle.
Continual Improvement	The on-going process of improving performance through establishment of objectives, the use of monitoring, audit findings and management reviews; analyzing information and implementing corrective and preventive actions.
Endemic species	A species which is found exclusively in a particular region or location and not found naturally anywhere else.
The Equator Principles	A financial industry benchmark developed by private sector banks for determining, assessing and managing social and environmental risk in project financing. The Principles apply to all new project financings globally with total project capital costs of US$10 million or more, and across all industry sectors.
The Equator Principles' Social and Environmental assessment	An assessment that determines the social and environmental impacts and risks (including labour, health, and safety) of a proposed project in its area of influence. It is an adequate, accurate and objective evaluation and presentation of the issues, whether prepared by the producer, consultants or external experts. The Assessment should also propose mitigation and management measures relevant and appropriate to the nature and scale of the proposed project. See Principle 2 and Exhibit II of the Equator Principles at www.equator-principles.com for further details.
Forest	See Native forest
High Conservation Value Areas	High Conservation Value Areas are critical areas in a landscape which need to be appropriately managed in order to maintain or enhance High Conservation Values (HCVs). There are six main types of HCV Area. Based on the definition originally developed by the Forest Stewardship Council for certification of forest ecosystems, but now increasingly expanded to apply to other credible assessments of other ecosystems. HCV1. Areas containing globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values (e.g. endemism, endangered species, refugia). HCV2. Globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape-level areas where viable populations of most if not all naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance. HCV3. Areas that are in or contain rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems. HCV4. Areas that provide basic ecosystem services in critical situations (e.g. watershed protection, erosion control). HCV5. Areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities (e.g. subsistence, health).

	HCV6. Areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity (areas of cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance identified in cooperation with such local communities).
Indicators	The 'operational' level of a standard expressed in measurable statements which allow assessment of conformance.
Indirectly employed workers	Workers indirectly employed on the farm refers in this standard to employees of service providers who carry out services directly related to the production process. Further definition of those '*services directly related to the production process*' should be carried out by national interpretation processes.
Integrated Crop Management	A system of crop production which conserves and enhances natural resources while producing a crop on an economically viable and sustainable foundation. A whole-farm, long-term strategy incorporating both new technologies and traditional knowledge and practices. See Annex 5 for further details.
Local Communities	Groups of people and families legitimately living or working on or near to the property to be certified, or between properties in case of multiple or group certification, and influenced by or influencing the activities of the property.
Native forest	Areas of native vegetation of 1ha or more with canopy cover of more than 35 % and where some trees(at least 10 trees per hectare) reach 10m in height (or are able to reach these thresholds in situ (ie. In that soil/climate combination)).
No-tillage	A way of growing crops from year to year without disturbing the soil through ploughing. Also known as direct drilling, zero tillage and conservation tillage.
Pesticides	Pesticides includes herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides and insecticides.
Phytosanitary products	Agrochemicals used for controlling pests and weeds including herbicides, fungicides and pesticides.
Principles	The 'intent' level of the standard, expressed in fundamental statements about a desired outcome.
Sharecroppers	A type of tenant farmer who is allowed by the owner to use the land in return for a share of the crop produced on the land.
Standard	Standards are documents containing technical specifications or other precise criteria which are used as rules, or guidelines and form the requirements to be met.
Traditional land users	Communities (or individuals where population is very sparse) that have been exercising use or access rights on the property being certified for an extended period of time.
Wetlands	Areas of marsh, fen, peatland, or water - whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary- with water that is static or flowing, brackish or salt (Ramsar convention)
Workers	Where used in this document 'workers' includes permanent, temporary and seasonal workers and sharecroppers

Zoning	The classification of allowable or preferred land use

Annex 4: RTRS Approach to Responsible Conversion

There will be two phases:

- For the short term, an interim approach will be used. This is set out in criterion 4.4 of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production Version 1.0.
- For the medium term, the RTRS will develop official RTRS approved macro-scale maps which will provide biodiversity information and a system which will orient responsible expansion of RTRS soy. This work will be carried out as described below and should be completed before 31st December 2012 for Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay.

RTRS-approved maps and System

1. Summary

National level macro-scale maps will be created through a multi-stakeholder process, which will provide guidance on responsible expansion. These maps will indicate four categories of area:

- Category I Areas = areas which are critical for biodiversity (hotspots), where stakeholders agree there should not be any conversion of native vegetation to responsible soy production.
- Category II Areas = areas with high importance for biodiversity where expansion of soy is only carried out after an HCVA assessment which identifies areas for conservation and areas where expansion can occur.
- Category III Areas = areas where existing legislation is adequate to control responsible expansion (usually areas with importance for agriculture and lower conservation importance).
- Category IV Areas = areas which are already used for agriculture and where there is no remaining native vegetation except legal reserves and so no further expansion is occurring.

Guidance will also be produced on how to undertake the HCVA assessments required for expansion in Category II areas.

2. Development of generic global methodology

2.1 RTRS will convene an international multi-stakeholder group to develop the generic global methodology to be used to develop the national macro-scale maps.

a) The group should include representatives of each RTRS constituency and country.

   i. Note: the group should aim to include 1 person per constituency from each of Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay plus at least 3 representatives (1 representative per constituency) from other main soy producing countries.

b) The group should include technical experts.

c) The group should work by consensus.

2.2 The group will review existing methodologies and produce a methodology for the RTRS which addresses:

a) The minimum criteria which need to be considered in developing national maps.

b) The important data layers which should be included and other optional layers.

c) Possible sources of data which should be used.

d) Develop criteria on how to assign different categories.

e) Any other necessary issues.

2.3 The group will review existing methodologies for undertaking on-farm HCVA assessments required for farms in Category II areas and develop generic guidance for RTRS.

3. Production of national macro-scale maps

3.1 Establish a national multi-stakeholder group in each country (as a sub-group of the RTRS National Technical Group) to oversee the map development process. The group should include both representation of each RTRS constituency and technical expertise.

Note: for Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay this group will include the 3 national members of the global multi-stakeholder group.

3.2 The national multi-stakeholder group interprets the global methodology and agrees on the work to be undertaken at a national level including:

a) National interpretation of criteria to be used.

b) Sources of information and data to be used including all official maps, conservation maps etc which provide consistent information including sub-national maps.

c) Definitions of important areas for conservation and for agricultural expansion in the country.

d) Any additional information required.

e) Agreement on criteria for assignment of categories.

f) Any other issues.

3.3 A technical group is assigned to undertake the mapping in line with the national level guidance developed by the multi-stakeholder group.

3.4 The multi-stakeholder group reviews the maps and agrees on the mapping of the categories.

3.5 The multi-stakeholder group reviews the generic methodology for on-farm HCVA assessments for expansion in Category II areas and produces a national version.

3.6 The national map and methodology, once agreed by the national multi-stakeholder group, is submitted to the RTRS National Technical Group for approval and once approved is submitted to RTRS for endorsement.

4. Implementation

Once national maps and methodologies are endorsed they replace any interim approach to managing responsible expansion.

Annex 5: Integrated Crop Management (ICM) Measures and Practices in Soy Production

The approach of RTRS towards Integrated Crop Management (ICM) is the voluntary adoption of an increasing number of ICM measures and sub-measures over time, according to a plan that is devised with professional guidance, which in the case of group certification may be provided by the group manager to individual group members. The table below presents a non-exhaustive list of measures and practices that can be used in the development and auditing of the ICM plan developed by the producer or producer group.

Measure	Practices
1. Prevention	1a. Conservation tillage (including zero tillage, zero tillage sowing, contour ploughing, etc.) 1b. Mechanical control practices to prevent weed seeds from germinating or spreading 1c. Maintaining vegetative or residue soil cover in between crops 1d. Crop rotation (including 1c.) 1e. Choice of seed variety: choose resistant variety against the main pest 1f. Monitor and record harmful and beneficial organisms 1g. Buffer zones and refuges for biodiversity (for example hedges, riparian vegetation, etc.)
2. Technical measures for cultivation	2a. Sowing date / timing 2b. Scouting in field to assess damage-threshold for all pests (proven by daily record keeping) 2c. Use of fertilizer with evidence of need provided by professional soil/fertilization specialist 2d. Manual weed removal / intercultural operations 2e. mechanical weed removal / intercultural operations which are not detrimental to soil structure, organic matter content or other soil and water values
3. Systems for early warning and advise	3a. Use of weather information to determine applications 3b. Use of pest traps 3c. Use of decision support systems or manuals 3d. Use of warning systems or services for pests and diseases such as soy bean rust
4. Non-chemical crop protection	4a. Use of naturally occurring beneficial insects by maintenance of buffer zones / natural vegetation 4b. Use of biological control agents 4c. Use of crop protection substances of natural origin 4d. Use of inoculants (symbiotic bacteria) to promote Nitrogen uptake

Measure	Practices
5. Chemical crop protection and application techniques	5a. Rotation of active ingredient 5b. Application of phytosanitary products only when the economical damage threshold is exceeded 5c. Use of selective and low human toxicity and low ecotoxicity phytosanitary products 5d. Use of narrow spectrum phytosanitary products 5e. Use of spot wise / precision application
6. Emission reduction	6a. Use of adequate and well calibrated equipment 6b. Spray-free zone towards principal water courses in accordance with professional agrochemical specialist's advice 6c. In the use of aerial spraying there is no application where a temperature inversion or other unfavorable meteorological condition (high wind speed, etc.) occurs.

Annex 6: Guidance for National Interpretations

This guidance **must** be followed by RTRS National Technical Groups[3] when developing National Interpretations of the RTRS Standard for Responsible Soy Production Version 1.0

Criterion reference	Guidance for National Interpretation
1.1	Provide guidance on what the applicable laws are. List applicable laws in the national interpretation document and on the RTRS website.
1.2	Provide further definition of what constitutes acceptable evidence of *legal use rights to land* and appropriate methods of proving rights. Provide guidance on how to deal with situations where the legal process for resolving land tenure and use rights is very long. Address rental and sharecropper agreements where applicable.
1.3	Produce a list of possible indicators, which can voluntarily be selected by the producer (certification applicant) to demonstrate continual improvement; e.g. soil carbon content, use of agrochemicals, state of riparian vegetation etc.
2.1	2.1.4-2.1.5 Where legal and considered essential – national interpretations may consider including that on family farms, children between 13 and 15 years old may carry out light productive activities during the peak season, providing this does not exceed 14 hours per week and does not interfere with their schooling.
2.2	Define the scope of '*services directly related to the production process'* (See Annex 1 Guidance for criterion 2.2). In those countries where there are no requirements for formal labor agreements between worker and employer, define the alternative documented evidence of a labor relationship that must be provided (eg. Registration of employees with social security / employment agency)
2.5	Define the scope of 'services directly related to the production process' (See Annex 1 Guidance for criterion 2.5). Establish whether the minimum wages stipulated by national legislation or sector agreements are adequate to meet basic needs. Where they are not adequate, provide clear guidance as to: a) what is acceptable in order to meet basic needs (eg. reference values) (Reference ILO Convention131 Minimum Wage Fixing) b) the methodology to be used to stipulate this (eg SA8000 calculation) c) a methodology to achieve basic needs (eg. step by step approach of SA8000-2008 version) National interpretations may include additional indicators in relation to this point.
3.3	Provide guidance on an appropriate interpretation of '*timely manner'*.
4.1	Identify whether existing national legislation for impact assessments is

[3] Or any group recognized by RTRS as carrying out official RTRS National Interpretation

Criterion reference	Guidance for National Interpretation
	adequate to meet the requirements of this criterion. If not: a) Define 'large and high risk new infrastructure' for the country/ region. Examples of new infrastructure may include: silos, storage areas, buildings, roads, bridges and dams; and b) Define the appropriate professional qualifications or experience of person(s) carrying out the assessment of impacts. National interpretations may also produce templates or guidance on how impact assessment should be carried out
4.2	4.2.4 Provide information on existing programs for re-using or recycling waste products.
4.3	4.3.1 Provide guidance on how to deal with the situation where operations by machine on a farm are outsourced. 4.3.1 Evaluate the appropriateness of the requirement for recording for smallholders.
4.4	4.4.1.2 c) Option 1 Compile a list of appropriate official maps National interpretations should: 1. Further elaborate the definition of native forest including identifying the biomes which meet this definition 2. Not establish requirements less stringent than the generic definition 3. Provide guidance on how these areas can be identified
4.5	For countries where on-farm reserves are required by law, NI s must specify acceptable means of verification for compliance with these laws: eg. Via satellite images, registration of the area in the land registry. In countries where soy is native, develop indicators related to protecting genetic diversity of soy.
5.1	5.1.2 Provide guidance on what needs to be measured and monitored, including the supply of water. 5.1.2 Provide information on how the monitoring can be carried out.
5.2	Develop more specific guidance regarding restoration plans which are adapted to the national situation taking into account the scale of operation, differences between biomes within countries and different legal requirements. Define the width of the riparian strip to be maintained or restored. This should depend on the width of the watercourse. Clarify requirements for small farms.
5.3	Identify the most appropriate techniques to maintain soil quality and minimize soil erosion. Techniques to maintain soil quality may include:

Criterion reference	Guidance for National Interpretation
	• Conservation agriculture • Crop rotation • Balanced fertilization Techniques to control soil erosion may include: • Management of on-farm roads • Management of sloping areas • Maintenance of permanent soil cover • Zero tillage (no-till farming) Identify appropriate indicators for monitoring which need to be based on the key issues according to production type and region. Any monitoring indicators chosen should be the most straightforward and give good information. Suggestions include: Analysis of organic matter, total nitrogen (N) (total N can be estimated as 5% of organic matter), phosphorous (P), pH, electrical conductivity, measurement of surface residues (quality and quantity 30 days before the mean sowing date with a tolerance of +\- 10 days).
5.4	Take into account scale and context especially for small farms– this relates to both the level of ICM expected and the records maintained.
5.5	5.5.1 Take into account scale and context, especially for small farms. 5.5.3 Identify whether national regulation is sufficient for the indicator. Clarify additional requirements, where these are necessary.
5.6	Provide lists of chemicals listed in the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and any country-specific banned agrochemicals.
5.7	Translate relevant laws and protocols into understandable guidance for different types of procedures. Add additional indicators referring to the guidance to be followed. (e.g. guidance from international protocols) 5.7.2 Take into account scale and context, especially for small farms.
5.8	5.8.1 Provide guidance on which institutions provide the systems mentioned. 5.8.2 Provide guidance on how communication is to be carried out, i.e. what means of communication are appropriate.
5.9	5.9.1 Define good agricultural practices for agrochemicals application. Provide a list with all WHO Ia, Ib and II agrochemicals including local or trade names. 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 Requirements for small farms should be appropriate to scale and context. 5.9.3 Define how people should be informed about spraying for each country or region. This may be, for example, by radio, by SMS or by a warning rocket 5.9.3 – 5.9.5 Clarify the main national legal requirements and limits related to applications of agrochemicals and any additional requirements for the standard, including minimum distances of application if not established by law.

Criterion reference	Guidance for National Interpretation
5.10	Provide guidance on the relevant coexistence situations and the measures associated with them.
5.11	Define '*known legal quality sources*'.